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# ERS NEWSLETTER

A Bimonthly Newsletter for Economic Research Service Employees and Colleagues

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, DC  
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## Clayton Detailed to USTR

ERS Deputy Administrator Kenneth Clayton has been detailed to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), Executive Office of the President. He will be working with the agricultural affairs staff in the USTR and on an interdepartmental task force to develop the U.S. position on agriculture for the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations.



Carolyn Riley

During 1979-83 Clayton was chief, Food and Agricultural Policy Branch, National Economics Division (NED). In that position, he was involved in USDA's efforts on the 1981 farm bill. He became director of NED in 1983 and was recently appointed Deputy Administrator.

Since 1983, Clayton has led the U.S. participation in a number of activities at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris, including a recently completed major study on liberalized trade in agriculture that calculated subsidy levels and estimated international

effects of reduced levels of assistance. □

## Reorganization Announced

ERS Administrator John Lee recently announced a reorganization of the agency. The major focus of the reorganization is to strengthen ERS's commodity analysis program, to provide global dimensions to commodity analysis, policy, and situation and outlook activities, and to integrate the domestic and international divisions of the ERS programs. The reorganization also aims at improving linkages among ERS's research, situation and outlook, staff analysis, and economic indicators functions. While the announced reorganization concentrates on the commodity analysis, international trade analysis, and policy analysis program areas, it has impacts on every segment of the agency.

Specific objectives are to:

- increase the budget and staff of the commodity analysis program;
- provide a structure that offers the best possible career track opportunities for commodity analysts and other specialists;
- strengthen the role and increase the visibility of senior commodity analysts and other specialists;
- integrate domestic and international perspectives for all ERS programs; and
- improve the linkages among all ERS programs.

ERS will continue to operate with four program divisions and a data services center. However, the four

program divisions will be renamed and internally restructured. The new divisions are:

- Agriculture and Rural Economy Division, which will focus on the linkages between macroeconomics, agriculture, and rural interests;
- Agriculture and Trade Analysis Division, which will integrate domestic policy and foreign trade policy analysis;
- Commodity Economics Division, which will integrate domestic and international commodity analysis and be organized along commodity lines; and
- Resources and Technology Division, which will have an increased emphasis on inputs, technology, and productivity.

Although some staff and dollars will be redirected to strengthen commodity analysis, the total number of staff will not be reduced because of the reorganization.

All four program areas are critical to the mission of ERS. Informal operation under the new structure will begin in May, pending departmental approval.

The following are the new organizational structure and key leadership of the four program divisions:

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## **Agriculture and Rural Economy Division**

*Kenneth Deavers*, director  
*David Brown*, associate director  
*David Harrington*, deputy director  
*Thomas Carlin*, chief, Farm and Rural Economy Branch  
*James Johnson*, chief, Farm Sector Financial Analysis Branch  
*Patrick Sullivan*, chief, Finance and Tax Branch  
*Max Jordan*, chief, Human Resources Branch  
*Thomas Hady*, chief, National Economy and History Branch  
*Norman Reid*, chief, Rural Business and Government Branch

## **Agriculture and Trade Analysis Division**

*Kelley White*, director  
*John Dunmore*, associate director  
*Neilson Conklin*, deputy director  
*Edward Overton*, chief, Agriculture and Trade Indicators Branch  
*Vernon Roningen*, chief, Agricultural and Trade Policy Branch  
*Kenneth Gray*, chief, Centrally Planned Economies Branch  
*Cheryl Christensen*, chief, Developed Market Economies Branch  
*Gene Mathia*, chief, Developing Economies Branch  
*(Vacant)*, chief, U.S. Agricultural Policy Branch

## **Commodity Economics Division**

*Patrick O'Brien*, director  
*Robert Bohall*, associate director  
*Donald Seaborg*, deputy director and director, Situation and Outlook Coordination Staff  
*Mack Leath*, chief, Crops Branch  
*Kenneth Baum*, chief, Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Branch  
*Frederic Hoff*, chief, Fruits, Vegetables, Sweeteners, and Tobacco Branch  
*Ronald Trostle*, chief, Commodity and Trade Analysis Branch

*Lester Myers*, chief, Food Marketing and Consumption Economics Branch

## **Resources and Technology Division**

*John Miranowski*, director  
*Katherine Reichelderfer*, associate director  
*John Schaub*, chief, Inputs, Technology, and Productivity Branch  
*Robert Boxley*, chief, Land Branch  
*Anthony Grano*, chief, Resource Policy Branch  
*(Vacant)*, chief, Soil and Water Branch □

## **ERS Announces Excellence Awards**

Four Excellence Awards were presented at the Administrator's Eighth Special Merit Awards Ceremony on March 4. The awards recognize outstanding work by ERS staff in research, staff analysis, and situation and outlook. The annual awards carry a \$4,500 cash payment for an individual award or \$6,000 for a group award. Excellence awardees also receive the Administrator's Special Merit Award.



*John Lee and Kuo Huang*

This year's research award went to Kuo Huang for his work on estimation of complete demand systems for food commodities. This

year's staff analysis award went to Michael Dicks, Anthony Grano, Katherine Reichelderfer, and William Boggess (U. of Florida) for outstanding staff work and analyses that provided innovative and timely information for departmental decisions on the implementation of the Conservation Reserve Program.

Two situation and outlook group awards were made. The first went to Gary Ender, Rhodia Ewell, Amjad Gill, Maurice Landes, and Richard Nehring for excellence in planning and producing an innovative, analytical, thorough, and well-written situation and outlook report on South Asia; the second award went to the food marketing review team of Walter Epps, Anthony Gallo, Charles Handy, Phillip Kaufman, Harold Linstrom, James MacDonald, Judith Putnam, and Michael VanDress for development and initiation of a publication providing important information on the current structure and performance of the food marketing system.

*[Additional photos of awardees are on page 4.]* □

## **Economic Research Service**

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### **Editors:**

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## Administrator's Letter – *The Philosophy Behind the Reorganization*

"Here we go with another reorganization!" That common reaction is understandable. Reorganizations can be disruptive and costly. In general, my philosophy is to avoid incurring such costs unless changes are clearly necessary or unless the potential benefits outweigh the costs. Why, then, at a time when budgets are tight, are we undertaking changes?



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First, a clear need exists to strengthen our commodity analysis capability. Commodity situation and outlook is a bread-and-butter thrust of the ERS program. But our commodity analysts' ranks have grown thin. Workloads are heavy and frustration levels high. A perception exists among our constituency that, while the quality of our staff is good, ERS no longer enjoys the prestige it once had in commodity analysis. Restoring that prestige necessitates, among other things, adding more resources to commodity analysis, which could have been done without reorganization.

But building a first-rate commodity program also requires integrating domestic and international commodity analysis and providing an organizational framework that offers attractive career paths and enhances the visibility and clout of commodity analysts. These were the major reasons behind the creation of the Commodity Economics Division, devoted entirely to commodity situation and outlook, analysis, and research.

Second, an equally urgent need exists to integrate U.S. domestic policy analysis with foreign trade policy analysis. Most of the policy questions we now must address require either explicit or implicit treatment of the linkages between U.S. domestic agricultural policies and behavior in the rest of the world. Moreover, policy analysis and research must be enhanced with indepth understanding of policies and behavior in major countries and regions of the world. These were the major reasons behind the creation of the Agriculture and Trade Analysis Division.

The 1978 reorganization of ERS sought to heighten the agency's sensitivity to the fact that the United States is now an integral part of a global economic system. The creation of an expanded International Economics Division provided that emphasis. The current reorganization is, in essence, a maturing of that same concept. In other words, our rural economy is so integrated into the global economy that the entire ERS program is being cast in a global perspective. Thus, in addition to merging domestic and international aspects of policy and commodity analysis, our resource, technology, rural, and farm economy work will give more recognition to international linkages.

I believe that the changes will better position ERS to exploit its comparative advantage and best serve the priority information needs of private and public decisionmakers in the decade ahead. We will continue to maintain the balance of situation and outlook, analysis, and research that best ensures fulfilling Don Paarlberg's admonition that ERS be "...the honest mirror to agriculture and rural America."

  
John Lee



USDA

*Amjad Gill, Richard Nehring, Rhodia Ewell, Maurice Landes, and Gary Ender*

## North American Center for IIASA Agricultural Model

A consortium of government, university, and private research institutions will jointly support a North American Center for the global agriculture model of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) Food and Agriculture Program. The consortium includes ERS, Agriculture Canada's Marketing and Economics Branch, the Iowa State U. Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, Resources for the Future's National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy, and U. of Guelph's Dept. of Agricultural Economics.

The North American Center, located at Iowa State, will be the regional repository of the IIASA model and will generally focus on developing global agricultural modeling capability. The North American Center will use the model to produce longer term projections for U.S., Canadian, and world agriculture. Initially, the North American Center's activities will be devoted to enhancing U.S. and Canadian components of the IIASA model and tailoring them to the study of trade policy and long-term resource use patterns. IIASA will have at least five regional centers, including the North American Center and European Community Center. □



USDA

*James MacDonald, Harold Linstrom, Charles Handy, Phillip Kaufman, Judith Putnam, Anthony Gallo, and Walter Epps*

## ERS and RFF Sponsor Workshop on Trade-Resource Links

ERS and Resources for the Future recently sponsored a workshop on linkages between natural resources and international



USDA

*Michael Dicks, Katherine Reichelderfer, and Anthony Grano*



trade in agricultural commodities. The workshop objectives were to:

- promote interaction between resource and trade economists;
- identify the critical trade-resource linkages; and
- develop a research agenda for examining implications of the linkages.

Plenary session papers dealing with theoretical issues were presented by Philip Abbott (Purdue U.) and ERS economist Stephen Haley, Ford Runge and James Houck (U. of Minnesota), and John Antle and Richard Howitt (U. of California, Davis). Workshop participants were divided into four small groups composed about equally of trade and resource economists. Papers prepared for each group helped focus the discussion on the effects of:

- natural resource endowments on trade,
- natural resource policies on trade,
- trade policies on the use and value of natural resources, and

■ technological change on the use and value of natural resources.

ERS economist John Sutton (786-1405) coordinated the workshop. A proceedings publication is planned for late 1987. □

## State Agricultural Experiment Stations History Published

As part of the Smithsonian Institution's commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Hatch Act, USDA Deputy Secretary Peter Myers presented Representative E (Kika) de la Garza the first copy of *The Legacy: A Centennial History of the State Agricultural Experiment Stations*, which was written by ERS historian Norwood Kerr (786-1896). Commemorative copies of the 318-page volume were sent to President Reagan, Vice-President Bush, USDA Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng, and USDA Assistant Secretary

for Science and Education Orville Bentley.

On hand to witness the presentation to de la Garza, the chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, were a number of Members of Congress, USDA administrators, and representatives from every State agricultural experiment station. Myers, de la Garza, Robert Adams (Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution), and Patrick Jordan (Administrator of USDA's Cooperative State Research Service) spoke on the importance of the century-old Federal-State partnership in agricultural research.

Kerr's study, commissioned in 1984 by the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, traces the development of the State experiment station system by focusing on the evolution of administrative policies and procedures between the State stations and their partners in USDA. A limited number of free copies of the book are available from the Cooperative State Research Service (447-8752). □

## IATRC To Hold Symposium

The International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium (IATRC) will hold a symposium on "Elasticities in International Agricultural Trade," July 30–August 1, Dearborn Inn, Dearborn, MI. For information, contact Laura Bipes, IATRC Administrator, Dept. of Agricultural and Applied Economics, U. of Minnesota, 1994 Buford Ave., 231 Classroom-Office Bldg., St. Paul, MN 55108 (612-625-1757). ERS is one of the sponsors of IATRC. □



USDA

## Current Research

### Downturn in Land Values Moderates

U.S. farmland values declined again in 1986, but less than in 1985, according to ERS economists William Heneberry (786-1428) and Charles Barnard, who prepared USDA's just-released annual summary report on land values. The average value per acre on Feb. 1, 1987, was \$548, down 8 percent from a year earlier. Values dropped 12 percent between Feb. 1, 1984, and Feb. 1, 1985. Adjusted for inflation, land values declined 10 percent and 14 percent in those two periods, respectively. Continuation of the downturn reflects the large acreage offered for sale relative to demand, concern about lower crop

prices, and uncertainty over farm programs—all of which are offsetting the effects of relatively high cash farm income, lower interest rates, and reduced operating expenses.

The largest declines in 1986 were in the Delta States (18 percent) and the Lake States (14 percent). In the Corn Belt and Northern Plains, which had severe losses in farmland values during the past 5 years, declines appear to be moderating. In contrast with other regions, the Northeast showed a significant increase in land values. Cash rents for farmland in 1986, though lower than 1985 in most States, declined less than the value of rented land. □

### How Much Farmland Is Actually Changing Hands?

A new survey conducted by ERS and USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service shows that only 3.3 percent of all U.S. rural land

changed hands during July 1985–June 1986. The rate of land transfer was highest in the Delta States (4.9 percent) and lowest in the Pacific States (1.8 percent).

These findings are reported by ERS economist Alex Majchrowicz (786-1425) in *Transfer Rates of U.S. Rural Land* (AIB-510), March 1987. Estimates for previous years, though not as firm as the latest survey results, indicate that 2-5 percent of U.S. farmland is normally transferred between owners in a year's time. Rural land (as defined in the survey) includes farms, ranches, and associated land, forest land, idle land, and wasteland. The acreage transferred in 1985/86 accounted for only 5 percent of the parcels (taxable tracts) changing hands, an indication that more small parcels of land rather than complete farms are transferring. This finding supports the view that farms are now expanding through acquisition of add-on parcels. □



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## Foreign Ownership of U.S. Farmland Little Changed

The latest report on foreign land holdings in the United States fails to support the concern that farms changing hands because of debt problems are being bought in large numbers by foreign investors. According to ERS researcher Peter DeBraal (786-1425), who prepares USDA's annual report to Congress on foreign holdings, foreign entities owned 12.4 million acres of U.S. agricultural land (farmland and forestry) at the end of 1986, less than 1 percent of the Nation's total agricultural land. Forest land accounts for 52 percent of all foreign-owned acreage, cropland for 17 percent, pasture and other agricultural land for 26 percent, and nonagricultural and unreported uses for the remaining 5 percent.

More than half of the U.S. land counted as foreign owned is actually held by U.S. corporations in which foreign persons have a significant interest. Fifteen percent of the foreign holdings are in Maine, most of which consist of forest land owned by three companies. Foreign persons from the United Kingdom, Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, Netherlands Antilles, and Switzerland account for 70 percent of the foreign-held agricultural land in this country. □

## U.S.-EC Briefing Book Prepared

ERS economists Thomas Fulton (786-1780), Lewrene Glaser, Mark Newman, and Gene Hasha are developing a U.S.-European Community (EC) briefing book for Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng. The briefing book, due out in early May, will also be released as an ERS *Staff Report*. The report

makes head-to-head comparisons of the role of agriculture in the economies of the United States and the European Community. The report concentrates on agricultural trade, government policies and programs, and the identification of areas of mutual interest. □

## Tobacco Industry Studied

ERS researchers Verner Grise (786-1768) and Karen Griffin are completing a study of the U.S. tobacco industry that examines tobacco uses, production, trade, and how Government programs affect farmers. The United States grows six major classes of tobacco: flue-cured, air-cured, fire-cured, cigar filler, cigar binder, and cigar



USDA

wrapper. The ERS study traces the production and use of tobacco leaf and products in the United States from their early history to the present.

Tobacco products that Grise and Griffin examined include cigarettes, cigars, smoking tobacco, chewing tobacco, and snuff. The cultural practices, harvesting and curing systems, market preparation procedures, and production costs

are described. Also, the study examines the changes in types and quantities of tobacco produced. □

## FCRS Data Being Used in Research

ERS researchers are studying economies of size for farms producing wheat, feed grains, cotton, rice, and other crops for which ERS estimates costs of production. A computer model is being developed to estimate whole-farm and individual commodity cost-of-production budgets. These budgets can be estimated for individual Farm Costs and Returns Survey (FCRS) observations or aggregated across various farm classes or geographic regions.

The FCRS data come from a probability-based multiframe stratified survey conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Individual commodity budgets estimated with this model can provide regional or national average estimates of cost-size relationships. Cost-size relationships for sugarbeets were estimated with an earlier version of this model. Rice is being evaluated now, and wheat and soybeans will be evaluated later this year. For more information, contact Dargan Glaze (786-1801). □

## ERS's Retail Meat Price Series Reviewed

ERS researchers Kenneth Baum (786-1820), Terry Crawford, Larry Duewer, Ronald Gustafson, Harry Harp, and Kenneth Nelson met with representatives from the Bureau of



Patricia Singer

Labor Statistics (BLS) and *Cattle-Fax* about the interpretation and improvement of ERS's series on retail Choice beef prices and price spreads, which are composite-based estimates that incorporate specific meat cut prices and other technical factors. Retail beef prices differ from ERS's composite series on retail Choice beef prices due to differences in quality, within-grade variation, product mix, amount of service and processing included, and trimming and boxing practices and standards.

ERS analysts are developing series on all-beef retail prices price spreads with additional meat cut data made available by BLS and other sources to beef industry decisionmakers and others. □

## Personnel Notes

### Hallahan Named DSC Branch Chief

Charles Hallahan is the new chief, Agency Systems Branch, Data Services Center. The branch



Carolyn Riley

supports agencywide computer software systems and is responsible for microcomputer and statistical consulting and training.

Hallahan joined ERS in 1980. He had been an operations research analyst at the Securities and Exchange Commission. He also held the position of assistant professor of mathematics at American U. and was a visiting lecturer at the U. of Wisconsin. Hallahan has a Ph.D. in mathematics from Rutgers U. He received the ERS Administrator's Special Merit Award in 1983 for his work in statistical consulting and training. □

### Kirdahi Appointed DSC Branch Chief

Wade Kirdahi is the new chief, Operations Branch, Data Services Center. The branch is responsible



Carolyn Riley

for management and support of all agency-level hardware, graphics, and telecommunications systems, as well as agency accounting and security. Kirdahi has been with ERS since 1981. Prior to that, he worked as an analyst at the Defense Nuclear Agency and at the Selective Service System. In 1982, he received the ERS Administrator's Special Merit Award for his work in improving telecommunications in ERS. □

### Reilly Is New RTD Section Leader

John Reilly is the new leader, Land Values Section, Resources and Technology Division. Reilly joined ERS in 1986 in the Inputs,



Carolyn Riley



Technology, and Productivity Branch of the Natural Resource Economics Division. His prior experience includes work on various energy, resource, and agricultural issues, including nuclear waste disposal, technical change related to agriculture and energy, farm tract surveys, family farm ownership, energy policy analysis, energy forecasting, model evaluation, environmental issues associated with energy use, international energy analysis and forecasting, and transportation issues.

Reilly has worked at Battelle Memorial Institute, Oak Ridge Associated Universities, and the U.S. Departments of Energy and Transportation. He is a coauthor of *Global Energy: Assessing the Future*, published by Oxford U. Press in 1985. He has a B.S. in economics and political science from the U. of Wisconsin, and an M.S. and Ph.D. in economics from the U. of Pennsylvania. □

## Cornell's Tauer at ERS

Loren Tauer, associate professor of agricultural economics at Cornell U., is working with ERS's Resources and Technology Division through August on a project to assess the economic and social impacts of current and emerging agricultural technologies on water quality. Tauer will help identify research information gaps and propose



Carolyn Riley

research to fill those gaps, as well as work through the impacts of a specific emerging technology. As a member of the Cornell team analyzing the impacts of the bovine growth hormone on the New York dairy sector and on individual farms, he brings substantial interest and experience to ERS's research on technology assessment.

Tauer has an M.S. in economics from South Dakota State U., and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from Iowa State U. His work at Cornell has centered on production economics and agricultural finance, with a research emphasis on the impacts of biotechnology and risk in farm decisionmaking. □

## Georgia's Vasavada in ERS

Utpal Vasavada, assistant professor of agricultural economics at the U. of Georgia, is a visiting



Carolyn Riley

scholar in ERS's Resources and Technology Division until January 1988. He will be developing a dynamic econometric model to help explain and evaluate shifts in agricultural productivity due to technical change. Vasavada will also be working with staff in the new Commodity Economics Division.

He has M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in agricultural economics from the U. of Maryland. His dissertation was on investment in U.S. agriculture. At the U. of Georgia, Vasavada teaches production economics and financial management. □

## NRED Assistant Director Gary Taylor Dies

ERS economist Gary Charles Taylor (55) died March 17 of cancer. He had been with USDA since 1959—in Arkansas, California, and Washington, D.C. He served as a branch chief and an assistant director of ERS's Natural Resource Economics Division (NRED) in the late 1960's. He was principal economist for the National Water Commission during 1970-73 and ERS Assistant Deputy Administrator during 1973-79. In 1979, Taylor rejoined NRED to lead ERS's river basin studies in collaboration with USDA's Soil Conservation Service. When the river basin work was phased out in the early 1980's, he again became Assistant Director of NRED, responsible for coordination of technology research throughout ERS.

Taylor was a member of a presidential mission to Egypt and participated in meetings of the International Association of Agricultural Economists held in the Soviet Union, Brazil, Kenya, and Canada. At the time of his death, he was treasurer of the American Water Resources Association.

He received several honors and awards during his career, including an ERS Administrator's Special Merit Award for his work on erosion control. Taylor had a B.S. in agronomy and an M.S. in soil science from Cornell U. and a Ph.D. in natural resource economics from the U. of California (Berkeley). He was the editor of *Papers on Current Agricultural Economic Issues*, published in 1977 by the International Association of Agricultural Economists. □

# Highlights of Staff Activities

## Data Services Center

**Robert Rovinsky** presented a paper on "Electronic Data Availability in USDA and How University Departments Can Prepare To Use It," at a meeting of the southern agricultural economics department heads, in Atlanta. □

## International Economics Division

**Nicole Ballenger, Barry Krissoff, James Langley (NED), Douglas Maxwell, and Mark Newman** presented papers at the Eastern Economics Association meeting • **Lon Cesal** briefed Orville Freeman, Agriculture Council of America, on agricultural growth markets • **Cesal, Mathew Shane, and Gary Vocke** provided information to Nancy Green, Bretton Woods Committee, who is preparing a report on Third World development and how it affects U.S. farmers • **Cheryl Christensen** and **Gene Hasha** met with Edgar Phillips, editor-in-chief of *Agra Europe*, to discuss the proposed EC fats and oils tax • **Robert Christiansen** traveled to Malawi and Kenya in conjunction with a project with the U.S. Agency for International Development to examine agriculture and development policies • **Christiansen, Krissoff, and Shane** participated in a conference on the Internationalization of U.S. Agriculture at the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Georgetown U. • **Nancy Cochrane, Robert Cummings, and Francis Urban** met with Imre Takacs, Hungarian agricultural attaché, and Peter

Csicsaky of the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture, to discuss agricultural costs of production and profitability in Hungary • **Marshall Cohen** met with Jorgen Mortensen, chief of the Statistical Section, Danish Farmer's Union, to discuss Denmark's agricultural situation • **Cohen** also met with Lauri Korpinen, deputy chief of mission, and Jorma Heinonen, scientific and technical counselor, Embassy of Finland, to discuss formalizing a technical exchange between Finland and the United States • **William Coyle, Larry Deaton, Kenneth Gray, Stephen Haley, Nancy Schwartz, Jerry Sharples, and Alan Webb** participated in a workshop on *Linkages Between National Resources and International Trade in Agricultural Commodities* cosponsored by ERS and Resources for the Future's National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy • **Robert Cummings and Francis Urban** met with Zbigniew Lis, Science Attaché of the Polish Embassy, about the upcoming visit of Polish parliamentarians to discuss USDA's research on Polish agriculture • **Cecil Davison** was interviewed by USDA's Vic Powell for the TV spot *Down to Earth* on material in the summary of the *March World Agriculture Situation and Outlook Report* • **John Dunmore** discussed the prospects for U.S. agricultural trade with the Extension Committee of the Joint Council on Food and Agricultural Sciences and the Agriculture and Rural Issues Group of the National Association of Counties • **Gene Hasha** advised reporters from the Commodity News Service and from *World Perspectives* on the significance of the proposed EC tax on vegetable oil and its implication for U.S. agriculture • **Stephen Magiera**

attended an agricultural trade subcommittee organizational meeting on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and the first meeting of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations Negotiating Committee on Agriculture, in Geneva • **Magiera** also presented a seminar at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on possible strategies for trade negotiations from a European viewpoint, in Rome • **Margaret Missiaen** provided information on the sub-Saharan food situation to Nell Walker, Bread for the World, who is seeking information for the development, implementation, and effectiveness of Early Warning Systems in forecasting droughts in sub-Saharan Africa • **Newman** spoke on "Competing with the European Community for African Markets" at a conference on Strategies for California Trade and Investments in Africa, jointly sponsored by the Department of Agricultural Business Management, California State Polytechnic U. (Pomona), and the Mayor's Task Force for African/Los Angeles relations, in Pomona • **Newman** also spoke to the Cal Poly chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta Agricultural Honor Society on "Competing with the European Community for World Agricultural Markets" • **Mary Ann Normile and Vernon Roningen** briefed former USDA Assistant Secretary Robert Thompson on U.S.-Canada free trade area issues and analyses • and **Roningen** also presented a paper on "Agricultural Trade Policy Modeling - Insights from the Static World Policy Simulation Modeling (SWOPSIM) Framework" and participated on a panel for the GATT Agricultural Policy Modeling Workshop, in Ontario. □



## National Economics Division

**Mark Ash and William Lin** spoke to the Economic and Market Research Committee of the American Feed Industry Association on results of a recently completed ERS feed survey • **Robert Barry** spoke on "U.S. Sugar Policy and the Sugar Program Improvements Act" at the American Farm Bureau Federation meetings, in New Orleans • **Neilson Conklin and Beverly Fleisher** presented a paper on "Policy Related Risk Research: A View from Washington" at the Southern Regional Research Project on the Economic Analysis of Risk Management Strategies for Agricultural Production Firms (S-180), in San Antonio • **Terry Crawford, Lawrence Duewer, John Ginzel, Ronald Gustafson, and Kenneth Nelson** met with the American Meat Institute to discuss its request to reassess procedures to approximate annual hamburger usage • **Denis Dunham** discussed food prices at a news conference sponsored by the Food Marketing Institute, in Cleveland • **Richard Fallert** spent two weeks in New Zealand under an exchange program working on developing a dairy trade model, gaining a better understanding of the New Zealand dairy industry, and assessing the U.S. competitive position in international dairy markets • **Thomas Fulton and Frederick Nelson** met with Jurgen Holmquist of the Swedish Embassy to discuss U.S. agricultural policy alternatives • **Ronald Gustafson and Richard Stillman** met with staff members of the House Ways and Means Committee and staff of Congressmen Jake Pickle and Charles Stenholm to discuss the latter's proposal to set up lamb import constraints • **Shannon Hamm** met with General

Accounting Office personnel to provide data and recommendations for a study on the California broccoli industry • **David Harvey** discussed the sugar and sweetener situation and outlook during an interview for USDA's *Down to Earth* television program • **Janet Livezey** met with the first secretary of the Embassy of Japan, the deputy director of international affairs, and the assistant director of the Research Division, Government of Japan, regarding the U.S. rice industry, the effects of the 1985 farm bill, and the outlook for U.S. rice • **James Miller** presented the dairy outlook at the Northeast Dairy Conference, in Allentown • and **Tanya Roberts** met with Thomas Houston, Coopers and Lybrand Consulting Group, to discuss the feasibility of food irradiation for Thai exports. □

## Natural Resource Economics Division

**Daniel Colacicco** gave a paper on "Economic Damages of Soil Erosion" at a workshop on Soil and Water Conservation on Steep Land, in Puerto Rico • **Roger Conway, Stephen Crutchfield, Ron Durst (ARED), James Hrubovcak, Bengt Hyberg, Sally Kane, Michael LeBlanc, Michael Moore, Patricia Riley, Eduardo Segarra, Robbin Shoemaker, and Utpal Vasavada** (visiting scholar from the U. of Georgia) presented papers at the Eastern Economics Association annual meeting, in Arlington, Va. • moderators and discussants at the Eastern Economics Association meeting included **Hyberg, Linda Langner, John Reilly, and Marc Ribaud** • **Bradley Crowder** discussed links between soil conservation, water quality, and individual farm planning at a

Maryland extension inservice training session on Agriculture and Groundwater, in New Windsor, Md. • **Stan Daberkow, Paul Andrienas, and John Schaub** briefed a delegation from Japan on U.S. input use and fertilizer and farm machinery production and marketing systems • **William Crosswhite, John Hostettler, and Kazim Konyar** briefed the Japanese delegation on water issues and their impacts on the ability of the United States to compete in world rice trade • **Michael Dicks** presented a paper on "Recursive Programming for Agricultural Policy Analysis" at the Missouri Valley Economics Association annual meeting, in Kansas City, Mo. • **Linda Lee, Moore, Clay Ogg, and Ribaud** participated in a workshop for congressional staff on Evolving Issues in Water Policy: The Agricultural Connection, sponsored by Resources for the Future, National Research Council, Farm Foundation, and Congressional Research Service • **Donald Negri** gave a seminar at Resources for the Future on "The 'Stragedy' of the Commons" • **Neill Schaller** participated in a symposium on Groundwater Protection: Potential for Avoiding Contamination by Agricultural Chemicals, sponsored by the Institute for Alternative Agriculture • and **Gene Wunderlich and Timothy Osborn** presented papers on the economics of land information at a symposium of the American Congress of Surveying and Mapping, in Baltimore. □

## Office of the Administrator

**Bob Robinson** participated in USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service planning conference, in Houston • and **Robinson** was also the keynote speaker at a meeting of the Atlanta Farmers Club, in Atlanta. □

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